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CIA/OSR /TF 750602 SOVIET GROUND FORCES TRAINING STUDY JUN 75
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

2/June 1975

CIA/OSR

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

MBFR/General Purpose Ground
Forces Branch
Defense Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C.

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ONLY

SUBJECT : Soviet Ground Forces Training Study

1. We have reviewed the final draft copy of the proposed study "Impact of the 1967 USSR Law on Universal Military Service on Ground Force Training and Readiness" as requested in your letter of 15 May. Although we believe that this study will result in a very useful and interesting paper, a number of problems remain in the present draft which prevent us from coordinating on the substance of the paper at this time.

2. Marginal comments, provided on the attached copy of the study, outline most of our remaining substantive difficulties. We have made an attempt to very roughly redraft the executive summary as an indication of the direction in which the whole paper might proceed. If you agree with the general direction of these changes, some additional redrafting would bring the text and conclusions into agreement with the new executive summary.

3. We believe that the principal change needed is the addition of a clearer, more definite judgment concerning whether or not the various compensating measures taken by the Soviets have adequately balanced the adverse effects on the combat readiness of the Soviet ground forces of the 1967 Law's reduction of

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the term of service and of the average conscript age. Although it is clearly a very difficult judgment, which can easily be interpreted in other ways, our feeling is that the following points emerge from the paper and should be developed as conclusions:

- a. The Law was principally motivated by, and expected to achieve, certain benefits which are either completely non-military or difficult to translate directly into gains in military readiness, i.e., earlier entry of men into the civilian economy, greater universality of military service.
- b. The Law had certain provisions which had an immediate and obvious negative effect on military training and readiness, i.e., reduction in the terms of service, reduction in the average age of conscripts.
- c. Certain provisions of the Law along with certain programs begun at a later date were clearly intended to balance these reductions in training and readiness.
- d. The Soviets have had numerous problems in implementing the provisions of the Law intended to improve training, however, the quality of the training provided by the programs has slowly improved.
- e. On balance, the compensatory measures still fall slightly short of balancing the adverse effects of the Law, however, the remaining difference in comparison with pre-1968 is small enough that no significant degradation of combat readiness appears to have resulted.
- f. It is obvious that if a number of the positive provisions of the Law had been

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instituted with no reduction in the service period, combat readiness could have substantially improved--rather than remaining roughly the same. Thus, there has been a "cost" stemming from the change in the period of service, whatever the net effect of the provisions of the Law.

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4. [REDACTED] Ground Forces Branch, 25X1A9a
ext 5300, remains the point of contact at this office.

[REDACTED]
Chief
Theater Forces Division, OSR

Attachment:
Draft of Proposed Study